

## **OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) was established in 1978 by amendment to the Hawaii State Constitution, Article XII, section 5. Under the direction of nine trustees elected statewide, OHA has functioned operationally as both a government agency with a strong degree of autonomy, and as a trust. Its purpose is to provide the opportunity for a better life and future for all Hawaiians. The mix of trust funds, earmarked for Hawaiians of at least 50 percent blood quantum, and general funds, provided annually by the Legislature, allows OHA to serve Hawaiians of any blood quantum. In addition to running its own programs, OHA provides many community-based programs with major funding and coordinates joint activities with participating organizations. It advocates for Hawaiians in the state Legislature, state and federal courts, in the United States Congress, and in the local media, as well as by supporting community initiatives and interests.

### **Office of the Administrator**

The Office of the Administrator manages the internal operations of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs by providing leadership, guidance, direction, and executive oversight. It implements the policies, rules, and directives adopted by the Board of Trustees and guides the organization's operation within the parameters established by the Board and in response to the concerns of OHA's beneficiaries. Additionally, the Office works with other agencies, government and private, that also serve Hawaiians toward OHA's mission of bettering the conditions of all Hawaiians. It reports to the Board on OHA's fiscal status and on the status of projects and programs. This includes developing and overseeing organizational structures and procedures; securing, supervising, and inspiring staff in the skills and attitudes required to work together; and guiding the implementation of OHA's functional, master, and strategic plans and processes.

### **Hawaiian Rights Division**

The Hawaiian Rights Division (HRD) advocates for the rights of Hawaiians at the federal, state, and county levels. Advocacy efforts include the protection of Hawaiians' traditional and customary rights, as well as ensuring that federal, state, and county resources are proportionately directed to Hawaiian needs. HRD reviews, comments, and consults on proposed federal, state, and county legislation, regulations, and projects. The Division fosters communication between OHA and neighbor island communities through community resource coordinators (CRC) on the islands of Hawaii (Hilo and Kona), Kauai, Maui, and Molokai. It is the CRC's responsibility to keep the public informed on OHA initiatives, and to keep OHA informed of its beneficiaries' concerns.

## **Administrative Services**

The Administrative Services office works in partnership with OHA divisions, beneficiaries, and the public by meeting OHA's administrative and financial management needs and interests through delivery of responsive and effective services in: finance, procurement and small purchasing, treasury, accounting, grants and agreements, land management, information systems and technology, major contracting, and acquisition.

## **Human Resources**

The Human Resources office effectively manages the human resources and facilities service capabilities of the agency. Human Resources services include recruitment, wage and benefit administration, employee services, staff development, leave accounting and personnel record keeping, and related areas in accordance with applicable statutes, standards, and guidelines. This office also coordinates the Volunteer Services Program on a statewide basis and secures volunteers to support OHA divisions and offices in meeting the needs of the beneficiaries.

## **Research and Development**

The Research and Development (R&D) office prepares Hawaiians to participate in determining, facilitating, promoting, and implementing a well, healthy, self-sustaining, empowered, and educated `ohana, community, nation, and `āina ola foundation (land).

The Research and Development office is located in Administrative Operations. R&D serves as the planning, research, and development arm of OHA. By providing technical assistance, contracting, and coordinating Hawaiian research and information, trustees and staff have the capacity to make informed and prioritized decisions on programs, projects, and grants to better conditions for Hawaiians.

## **Evaluation Unit**

The Evaluation Unit systematically monitors and ensures accountability of services within OHA programs, projects, and contracts, using an intricate identification process to measure and assess their merit and worth. The Evaluation Unit was created in FY-01 to provide OHA Trustees and Administration with information needed to make major decisions. In this respect, every division within OHA is affected by the recommendations of the Evaluation Unit.

## **Public Information Office**

The Public Information Office (PIO) assists in communicating OHA policies, programs, and activities, as well as information on Hawaiian issues vital to the Hawaiian community and

general public. It also supports all OHA divisions and offices with their media and information dissemination efforts and graphic design.

### **Education Program**

The Education Program facilitates educational opportunities for Hawaiians that are both culturally sound and promote academic success. Its duty is to enhance the pride, integrity, and resources of the Hawaiian 'ohana by increasing the understanding of Hawaiian values, learning style, and culture as they relate to education; to affect policies relating to Hawaiian heritage and educational opportunities for Hawaiians by identifying their educational needs; to disseminate information on educational services; and to promote and support the use of teaching of Hawaiian culture and language in both public and private schools.

### **Grants and Health and Human Services**

The Grants and Health and Human Services office serves Hawaiians through grant awards to support cultural, educational, and socioeconomic programs, as well as to assist health and human service agencies and organizations in providing effective services to OHA's beneficiaries.

### **Housing and Community Development Program**

The Housing and Community Development Program works cooperatively with others in building or rebuilding healthy, self-sufficient Hawaiian communities. This includes the planning and implementing of programs that foster the development of safe, decent, and affordable housing for Hawaiians. OHA also assists Hawaiians in achieving equality in living standards and economic endeavors through community enterprises.

### **Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund**

The Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund (NHRLF) fosters sustainable, Hawaiian-owned businesses by fostering economic independence, commitment, and fiscal responsibility through entrepreneurial/job development. NHRLF increases the availability and effectiveness of training and technical assistance to promote Hawaiian business ownership and increase entrepreneurial awareness and capability, and administers a business loan program that encourages Hawaiian-owned businesses and fosters job creation.

